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Medical Examiner Says Kennedy Died Because of Brace

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M., Nov. 27 (AP)—President Kennedy was fatally wounded by an assassin's second bullet because he was wearing a rigid back brace and did not slump over after being hit in the neck by the first shot, according to the president-elect of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences.

Dr. James Weston believes the President was hit by two bullets fired from behind his right shoulder. Because the brace prevented Mr. Kennedy from slumping forward or sideways, the second bullet hit him in the head, Dr. Weston said, adding that the President could have survived the neck wound.

Dr. Weston, who is also the New Mexico state medical examiner, has studied previously classified data dealing with the assassination Nov. 22, 1963.

He spent a week in the National Archives in Washington, D.C., studying photographs, X-rays and medical reports at the request of CBS News, which televised this week a documentary on the assassination.

The autopsy on President Kennedy was performed by military doctors who were not forensic pathologists and did not follow normal criminal investigation procedures, Dr. Weston said.

But he said he was satisfied with the medical aspect of the inquiry.

"I don't believe anybody could find any more," he said.

A better autopsy could have shown the angle of the fatal bullet, and a picture of the perts to determine the bullet's struck would have enabled experts to detrmine ethe bullet's point of origin, he said.

Dr. Weston added, however, that the President's car was hidden by a roadside sign in the only films of the crucial seconds when he was hit.